

Prayer fends away indecency and evil

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The believer has been advised in the Quran to be steadfast in prayer, for prayer fends away indecency and evil.

When the Prophet of Islam was asked about this verse he said: "If a person's prayer does not fend away indecency and evil, then his prayer is not really prayer at all."

Prayer is to remember the fact that one is living before a God who—though man cannot see Him—can see man. Whoever leaves the mosque with this fact firmly embedded in his mind cannot live forgetful of God.

In prayer a person testifies to the fact that God is the greatest of all beings. If one is truthful in one's testimony, then one will not claim greatness for oneself when one has finished praying.

Whatever one recites in prayer is a covenant before God that one will keep his commandments; then how is it possible that one should leave the mosque and treat people with arrogance and contumacy? The actions of prayer are a manifestation of the fact that one's heart is full of fear and love for God.

If one prays in the true spirit of prayer, then one's prayer will surely fend away indecency and evil. But if one's prayer is devoid of spirit, then it will be no more than a perfunctory action which has no connection with one's real life. It will be prayer in form, but not in reality: for it will not fend away indecency and evil.

It is as if one were to say: a son who stays lying down while he sees his father standing does not respect his father; a brother who sees his sister hungry and does not give her something to eat is not really a brother at all; the friendship of a person who hears of his friend's death and does not stop laughing is not really friendship at all.